

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ5492

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DINT-00	DODE-00
	DOE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00
	AC-01	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00
	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
	/008W						

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0398
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003558

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY
PARIS FOR CHARLES NEARY
NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/11
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: EXPECT HUGE VOTER TURNOUT IN ZIMBABWE,
POLITICAL POLLSTER TELLS AMBASSADOR

CLASSIFIED BY POLOFF TODD C. FAULK FOR REASONS: 1.5 (B)
AND (D).

1. (C) ON NOVEMBER 26, AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN, ACCOMPANIED BY POLOFF, MET MASIPULA SITHOLE, THE CHAIR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, COLUMNIST, AND DIRECTOR OF THE HARARE-BASED MASS PUBLIC OPINION INSTITUTE. SITHOLE REPORTED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION IS CURRENTLY COMPILING THE RESULTS OF A NATIONWIDE SURVEY RECENTLY CONDUCTED TO UNCOVER THE EXTENT OF VOTER APATHY IN ZIMBABWE. SURPRISINGLY, SITHOLE SAID THE INITIAL FINDINGS ARE POINTING TO AN 89 TO 90 PERCENT TURNOUT IN THE EARLY 2002 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, WHICH WOULD BE THE SECOND HIGHEST TURNOUT SINCE ZIMBABWE'S INDEPENDENCE. IT WOULD ALSO REPRESENT A MAJOR TURNAROUND FROM THE PREDOMINANT ELECTORAL TREND OF DECLINING VOTER PARTICIPATION SINCE INDEPENDENCE. TO ILLUSTRATE, SITHOLE STATED THAT 94 PERCENT VOTED IN 1980, 84 PERCENT IN 1985, 54 PERCENT IN 1990, 54 PERCENT IN 1995 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 31 PERCENT IN THE 1996 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, AND 48 PERCENT IN THE 2000 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

TOO LATE FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTION?

2. (C) SITHOLE THANKED THE AMBASSADOR FOR HIS RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT SAYING THAT THE U.S. WAS NOT INCLINED TO RECOGNIZE THE RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION UNLESS POLITICAL CONDITIONS IMPROVED. THIS IS A POINT THE U.S. SHOULD BE MAKING "A LOT LOUDER," THE PROFESSOR
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OPINED. MUGABE MUST BE WARNED OF DISINCENTIVES IF HE DOES NOT HOLD A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION; HOWEVER, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ONE IN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE, SITHOLE CONTINUED. IN 1990, WHEN FORMER ZANU-PF REFORMER EDGAR TEKERE RAN AGAINST MUGABE, THERE WAS PLENTY OF "VIOLENCE AND SHOOTINGS." WHEN ASKED IF HIS INSTITUTE PLANNED TO CONDUCT A SURVEY ON PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCES, HE STATED THE RESULTS OF ONE WOULD BE COMING OUT BY LATE JANUARY.

AN UNHAPPY EXIT AWAITS MUGABE

3. (C) PRESIDENT MUGABE IS BENT ON WINNING THE ELECTION BY "HOOK OR CROOK," BUT WHEN THE PEOPLE TAKE TO THE STREETS, AN "UNHAPPY EXIT" WILL BE INEVITABLE FOR MUGABE, THE PROFESSOR PREDICTED. IF DISINCENTIVES DID NOT CONVINCE HIM TO HOLD A FREE ELECTION, THEN AT THIS POINT, AN EXIT PACKAGE OF INCENTIVES FOR MUGABE TO RELINQUISH POWER WOULD BE "APPROPRIATE." THE ARMY WOULD UNDERWRITE A SET OF ASSURANCES AND ACT AS NEGOTIATOR WITH TSVANGIRAI, WHO UNDERSTANDS THE NECESSITY OF LETTING MUGABE GO IN PEACE. MUGABE KNOWS HE IS UNPOPULAR AND IS WORRIED ABOUT HIS PHYSICAL SECURITY -- OTHERWISE HE WOULD NOT BE CLINGING TO POWER SO DESPERATELY. ASKED ABOUT MUGABE'S FINANCIAL SECURITY,

SITHOLE SAID THIS IS NOT THE PRESIDENT'S PRIMARY CONCERN. HE ALREADY HAS MORE THAN ENOUGH MONEY FOR HIM AND HIS FAMILY. HOWEVER, IF GIVEN THE PROPER ASSURANCES, MUGABE WOULD LEAVE POWER, SITHOLE OPINED.

A LITTLE HELP FROM MUGABE'S FRIENDS
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14. (C) AMBASSADOR THEN INQUIRED WHETHER MUGABE'S INNER CIRCLE WOULD ACCEPT MUGABE'S DEPARTURE, AND SITHOLE SAID THEY WOULD IF THEY WERE INCLUDED IN THE EXIT PACKAGE. ULTRALOYALISTS SUCH AS SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT EMMERSON MNANGAGWA -- AND PRESUMED HEIR TO THE MUGABE THRONE -- WOULD HAVE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DEPARTURE DEAL. EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE THOSE IN ZANU-PF WHO WILL AGAIN TRY TO PERSUADE MUGABE TO STEP ASIDE AT THIS YEAR'S RULING PARTY CONFERENCE, THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED. ALL THOSE REFORMISTS WITH INFLUENCE, SUCH AS FORMER MINISTER EDDISON ZVOBGO, HAVE BEEN PUSHED ASIDE. DEFENSE MINISTER SYDNEY SEKERAMAYI AND FORMER DEFENSE FORCES CHIEF SOLOMON MUJURU ARE "REASONABLE AND RATIONAL," BUT THEY ARE NOT MEMBERS OF MUGABE'S INNER CIRCLE. INFORMATION MINISTER JONATHAN MOYO -- WITH WHOM SITHOLE USED TO JOG IN THE U.S. AND AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE -- COULD DIRECT TRANSITION EVENTS IN A POSITIVE WAY IF HE WAS PROPERLY APPROACHED AND GIVEN SIMILAR EXIT INCENTIVES, THE PROFESSOR OFFERED.

COMMENT

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	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/008W		

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P 271500Z NOV 01
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15. (C) WE ARE SKEPTICAL OF SITHOLE'S "INITIAL FINDINGS"
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OF A PREDICTED 89-90 PERCENT VOTER TURNOUT IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. ALTHOUGH WE WOULD HAVE TO SEE THE POLL'S RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY, WE HAVE TO TEMPER THE INITIAL FINDINGS WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO EVEN RESPOND TO POLLING QUESTIONS. REPORTEDLY, 50 PERCENT OF PEOPLE APPROACHED REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN AUTHORITATIVE SURVEY DUE OUT IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. IT IS AN EVEN BIGGER -- AND MORE CRITICAL -- LEAP FROM DESIRING A POLITICAL CHANGE AND ACTUALLY GOING TO THE POLLING BOOTH AND EXPRESSING THAT DESIRE UNDER THE CONDITIONS CURRENTLY PREVAILING IN ZIMBABWE.

SULLIVAN

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